

**AMENDMENTS TO THE CLAIMS**

1. (Currently Amended) A method for effectuating bill presentment and payment comprising:

maintaining a billing database, the billing database containing detailed billing information with respect to at least one bill, the at least one bill reflecting an account of at least one payer with respect to at least one biller;

generating an electronic summary of the at least one bill using the detailed billing information, at least one portion of the electronic summary being formatted in the form of a remittance slip ~~that would be traditionally associated with a paper based bill~~;

generating an electronic notification with respect to the at least one bill, the electronic notification containing the electronic summary and an address through which the billing database may be accessed; and

transmitting the electronic notification to the at least one payer, wherein the at least one portion of the electronic summary is printable can be printed out to serve as a remittance slip in a traditional method of payment of the at least one bill by the at least one payer, whereby thereby allowing the at least one payer to choose between paying the at least one bill electronically or mailing the remittance slip with an payment of the at least one bill retains control of the bill payment process by the traditional method.

2. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:

maintaining an Internet site, wherein the billing database containing the detailed billing information is maintained on the Internet site.

3. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the Internet site is maintained by the at least one biller.

4. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the Internet site is maintained by a Billing Service Provider (BSP) the BSP performing billing services for the at least one biller.

5. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein the Internet site is maintained by a Customer Service Provider (CSP) the CSP performing billing services for the at least one biller.

6. (Original) The method according to claim 2, wherein address through which the billing database may be accessed is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address of the Internet site, the method further comprising:

providing the at least one payer with access to the Internet site through the URL; and authenticating the at least one payer at the Internet site.

7. (Original) The method according to claim 6, further comprising:  
allowing the at least one payer with the opportunity to pay the bill electronically on the Internet site.

8. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the electronic notification is an e-mail message.

9. (Original) The method according to claim 6, wherein the step of authenticating the at least one payer requiring the at least one payer to enter a unique username and password.

10. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
registering the at least one biller with a billing service provider (BSP), wherein the BSP interfaces with the at least one biller with respect to the presentment of the at least one bill; and  
registering the at least one payer with a customer service provider (CSP), wherein the CSP interfaces with the at least one payer with respect to the payment of the at least one bill.

11. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein the BSP and CSP are the same entity.

12. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein the BSP is a bank.

13. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein the CSP is a bank.

14. (Original) The method according to claim 10, wherein there are a plurality of payers that have accounts with the at least one biller, the method further comprising:  
transmitting the detailed billing information with respect to the plurality of payers from the at least one biller to the BSP.

15. (Original) The method according to claim 14, wherein the step of transmitting the detailed billing information further comprises:  
transmitting the detailed billing information as a bulk file containing all of the detailed billing information for a specified period of time.

16. (Original) The method according to claim 15, wherein the specified period of time is one month.

17. (Original) The method according to claim 1, wherein the electronic summary information contains at least a name of the at least one biller, a statement date, a minimum amount due, a total amount due and a due date.

18. (Original) The method according to claim 1, further comprising:  
registering the at least one payer with the at least one biller with respect to receiving the electronic notification of the present invention.

19. (Currently Amended) A method for effectuating electronic bill presentment and payment comprising the steps of:

registering at least one biller with a service provider;  
maintaining a billing database the billing database containing detailed billing information with respect to at least one payer of the at least one biller;  
maintaining an electronic site wherein the at least one payer can view the electronic site, the electronic site containing a display of the detailed billing information;

authenticating the at least one payer before allowing the at least one payer access to the display of detailed billing information;

generating an e-mail containing summary information regarding a bill owed by the at least one payer to the at least one biller, ~~which is at least one portion of the summary information being formatted as a remittance slip that would be traditionally associated with a paper based bill; and~~

transmitting the e-mail to the payer, wherein the at least one portion of the summary information is printable can be printed out to serve as the remittance slip in a traditional method of payment of the bill by the at least one payer, ~~whereby thereby allowing the at least one payer to choose between paying the bill electronically or mailing the remittance slip with an payment of the bill retains control of the bill payment process by the traditional method.~~

20. (Original) The method according to claim 19, wherein the service provider is a business service provider.

21. (Original) The method according to claim 19, wherein the service provider is a customer service provider.

22. (Original) The method according to claim 20, wherein the business service provider is a bank.

23. (Original) The method according to claim 21, wherein the customer service provider is a bank.

24. (Currently Amended) A system for effectuating bill presentment and payment, the system comprising:

a billing database, the billing database containing detailed billing information with respect to at least one bill, the at least one bill reflecting an account of at least one payer with respect to at least one biller;

a processor coupled to the billing database, the processor:

generating an electronic summary of the at least one bill using detailed

billing information, at least one portion of the electronic summary being formatted in the form of a remittance slip that would be traditionally associated with a paper based bill,

generating an electronic notification containing the electronic summary and containing an address through which the billing database may be accessed; and a communication network coupled to the processor, the processor transmitting the electronic notification to the at least one payer over the communication network, wherein the at least one portion of the electronic summary is printable can be printed out to serve as the remittance slip in a traditional method of payment of the at least one bill by the at least one payer, whereby thereby allowing the at least one payer to choose between paying the at least one bill electronically or mailing the remittance slip with an payment of the at least one bill retains control of the bill payment process by the traditional method.

25. (Original) The system as recited in claim 24 further comprising:  
an Internet site, wherein the database containing the detailed billing information is maintained on the Internet site.

26. (Original) The system as recited in claim 25, wherein the Internet site is maintained by the at least one biller.

27. (Original) The system as recited in claim 25, wherein the Internet site is maintained by a billing service provider (BSP) the BSP performing billing services for the at least one biller.

28. (Original) The system as recited in claim 25, wherein the Internet site is maintained by a customer service provider (CSP) the CSP performing billing services for the at least one biller.

29. (Previously Amended) The system according to claim 25, wherein address through which the billing database may be accessed is a Uniform Resource Locator (URL) address of the Internet site, wherein the processor provides the at least one payer with access to

the Internet site through the URL, and wherein the processor authenticates the at least one payer at the Internet site.

30. (Original) The system according to claim 29, wherein, the processor allows the at least one payer with the opportunity to pay the bill electronically on the Internet site.

31. (Original) The system according to claim 29, wherein the electronic notification is an e-mail message.

32. (Original) The system according to claim 29, wherein the step of authenticating the at least one payer requiring the at least one payer to enter a unique username and password.